

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7370 IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV, EIND, PFOR, PE

SUBJECT: MARCONA - PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES USG-GOP TALKS UNDERWAY

REFS: A) STATE 253467; B) LIMA 8827; C) LIMA 8799

1. LIMA MORNING DAILIES ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, CARRIED REPORTS OF

A

PRESS CONFERENCE HELD THE PREVIOUS EVENING BY PRIME MINISTER VARGAS PRIETO AT WHICH HE ANNOUNCED THAT A USG DELEGATION HELD CONVERSATIONS WITH GOP OFFICIALS REGARDING COMPENSATION FOR THE MARCONA COMPLEX. ACCORDING TO ONE ACCOUNT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THESE CONVERSATIONS WERE PRELIMINARY IN NATURE AND THEY WILL CONTINUE WITHIN "A FEW DAYS WHEN THE USG REPRESENTATIVES WILL RETURN TO LIMA WITH MORE CONCRETE PROPOSALS." THE STORIES STATE THAT THE USG MISSION MET FRIDAY AFTERNOON IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FINANCE MINISTER BARUA, COMMERCE MINISTER ARIAS GRAZIANI AND FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA FLOR. THE "EXPRESO" STORY NOTES THAT THE PRIME MINISTER EXPLAINED TO THE REPORTERS THAT THE USG TEAM ARRIVED IN LIMA TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL, SINCE THE MATTER NO LONGER INVOLVES MARCONA (TODA VEZ QUE EL ASUNTO YA NO COMPETE A LA MARCONA")

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STORIES NOTE THAT DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FISHLOW HEADED THE USG

DELEGATION, ACCOMPANIED BY OTHER OFFICIALS FROM THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND TREASURY.

2. THE STORIES SAID THAT THE PERUVIANS INFORMED THE USG DELEGATION THAT DECREE LAW 21228 IS INALTERABLE AND THAT THE GOP WAS VERY PRECISE ON THIS POINT. (NOTE: THE STORIES CONFLICT AS TO WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER OR THE FOREIGN MINISTER MADE THIS REFERENCE, WITH "EXPRESO" AND "LA CRONICA" QUOTING DE LA FLOR, AND "LA PRENSA" QUOTING VARGAS PRIETO.)

3. COMMENT: DURING MEETING BETWEEN USG TEAM AND THE PRIME MINISTER ON FRIDAY, VARGAS PRIETO SAID HE REGRETTED HAVING TOLD THE PRESS THE USG TEAM WAS NOT IN LIMA (REF B) AND SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION. HE ASKED THE USG TEAM IF THEY HAD ANY OBJECTION TO DOING SO. HAVING RECEIVED AN AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE, THE PRIME MINISTER EVIDENTLY THEN DECIDED TO HOLD A BRIEF PRESS CONFERENCE TO CLARIFY MATTERS AND SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. LANGUAGE USED BY GOP WAS NON-POLEMICAL. FACT THAT GOP OFFICIALS DECIDED TO INDICATE THAT CONVERSATIONS WERE CONDUCTED IN CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE AND WILL CONTINUE IS A FAVORABLE SIGN THAT THE GOP IS PREPARING THE PUBLIC FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. THE REPERCUSSIONS TO THE DECREE LAW'S BEING FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO CHANGE WERE EXPECTED AND COUCHED IN MODERATE TONES.

4. EMBASSY PLANS NO PRESS STATEMENTS REGARDING THE MISSION, BUT, ON IF ASKED BASIS, WILL RESPOND TO QUERIES ALONG LINES IN REF A. DEAN

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